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## Senate

The Senate was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Thursday, February 9, 2012, at 9:30 a.m.

## House of Representatives

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2012

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WEBSTER).

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,  
February 8, 2012.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DANIEL WEBSTER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,  
*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

### MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 17, 2012, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

### AFGHANISTAN: AMERICA NEEDS THE TRUTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, Congress and the American people need to

hear the truth about Afghanistan. It is impossible for us to make thoughtful, rational decisions on policy if we do not receive straight, accurate information about the situation on the ground. And we have no right to keep our brave service men and women in harm's way day after day, week after week, based on a steady diet of rosy statements that tell us everything is going well, progress is being made, conditions are improving, and victory is at hand.

On January 18, I had the privilege of sitting down with U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel Daniel Davis for a special briefing on his assessment of the situation on the ground in Afghanistan. He had recently submitted reports in both classified and unclassified versions to his superiors at the Pentagon. I was joined at that briefing by my colleagues Congressman WALTER JONES and JOHN GARAMENDI, and we were not only impressed with Lieutenant Colonel Davis' character, but the information and analysis he shared with us. Simply put, the situation in Afghanistan does not reflect the optimistic statements we repeatedly hear from high military officials and commanders on a regular basis.

This week, a great deal of what Lieutenant Colonel Davis told us has appeared in the media in an article he wrote for the Armed Forces Journal, the Nation's oldest independent military magazine, and in The New York Times.

Lieutenant Colonel Davis talks about the difficulties of training the Afghan police and military, the challenges facing our own troops to establish sus-

tainable security zones, the rampant corruption, and the great discrepancy between the military's positive public statements and the classified material that contradicts such claims.

The briefing with Danny Davis comes close on the heels of a number of articles that appeared toward the end of last year about the more pessimistic conclusions found in the most recent National Intelligence Estimate on Afghanistan.

According to the press, the current NIE on Afghanistan recognizes that U.S. policy has not achieved the objectives outlined by the President; that instead it casts doubt on official assertions of progress made by the U.S. Government and military leaders. No one likes to hear bad news, Mr. Speaker, but we do need to hear the unvarnished truth. We need accurate information in order to get a genuine understanding of what the situation is like on the ground in Afghanistan. We need to know the very real challenges faced by our troops and our diplomatic, development, and humanitarian workers every day.

As Lieutenant Colonel Davis asserts, the amount of unclassified information available to the American people, the media, and public officials continues to shrink. Ironically, one week before being briefed by Davis, Congressman WALTER JONES and I sent a letter on January 12 to the President asking him to declassify and release the 2011 NIE in Afghanistan. We are still waiting for a response to that request.

Mr. Speaker, the U.S. has spent hundreds of billions of dollars on military

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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